



# Pageant and Talent Showdown Contestant Guide

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Jr. and Sr. Fair Queen Pageants	Talent Showdown	Youth Pageant & Kids Talent	Elite Ms., Ms. and Sr. Ms. Pageant
Friday and Saturday October 4th and 5th	Friday October 11th	Saturday October 12th	Sunday October 13th
Jr. Fair Queen (14-17*) (Friday) Sr. Fair Queen (18-23) (Saturday)	Junior Division (14-17) Senior Division (18-23) Adult Division (24+)	13 and under pageants Kids Talent (5-9) (10-13)	Elite Ms. (24-34) Ms. (35-55) Sr. Ms. (56-75)
New for 2024! Barton Coliseum	Arkansas Building & Finals on the Attraction Stage by the Midway!	Arkansas Building	

Thank you for choosing to compete in the Arkansas State Fair pageants and talent competitions. We look forward to helping you or your child build confidence and gain experience on stage. While we do not have full jurisdiction on how local county fairs operate their talent shows or pageants, we are excited to offer this as a guide on what to expect at the Arkansas State Fair. We promise to provide a fun, warm, inviting, professional atmosphere, and help you create a memorable experience that will last a lifetime. Our goal is to build character, spread kindness and encourage our contestants to be the best version of themselves on, and off the stage. We appreciate all of the district and county fair directors that pour their time and talent into the youth of our state and support them in advancing to the Arkansas State Fair.

-Arkansas State Fair Executive Directors  
Mary Moody and Ashton Pruitt

## Junior and Senior Fair Queen Pageants

**How do I compete?** Contestants must be a legal resident of Arkansas and win their local ASF affiliated county or district fair (where they reside) to be invited to the Arkansas State Fair pageant. In the event that your county does not have a fair, you can compete at the open pageant and win your local county title.

**Am I eligible?** Senior Fair Queen contestants must be 18-23 years old and either a graduating high school senior, enrolled in post-secondary education, or non-pursuant of education by October, 1st. Jr. Fair Queen contestants must be 14-17 years of age regardless of what grade you are in. If you are 17 and a senior, and want to compete in the senior division for a chance to win scholarships, you may do so. No one 18 and up can be in the Jr. Division. Junior and Senior contestants must be legal residents of that county or reside in that district for at least six months.

College Students: To be eligible to compete in the county or district fair where you are currently attending college, you must have completed one full semester, be a full-time student, and currently be carrying 12 credit hours.

A contestant must have been born a female. She cannot be, become, or at any time have been married, engaged, had a marriage annulled, pregnant, or have had a child. Contestants must not have ever been convicted of any crime or have any criminal charges pending.

Past ASF royalty are ineligible to compete again. ASF Jr. Fair Queens may compete when they age up into the Senior Fair Queen division.

**Open Pageant:** This event will be held only if there are enough contestants to hold a competition. To be eligible, you must be 1st runner up of your local fair or district competition, or reside in a county that does not have a local fair pageant. The winner of the open pageant will be crowned with the title of Jr./Sr. Diamond State. If any contestants are competing representing a county without a local pageant, they will be crowned with their county title. We want all counties to have a representative at the Arkansas State Fair pageant.

### **Alright, I won my local county/district or open title! What happens next?**

Fill out our official form online and submit your headshot. A more detailed schedule will be mailed and emailed to all contestants two weeks prior to the pageant along with one free wrist band for your guest. **Admission into Barton Coliseum is \$5 and free for kids under 5. Parking is free this weekend at the Arkansas State Fair. You will enter the main entrance at 2600 Howard Street in Little Rock, AR. Turn immediately right and watch for signs. This parking area is directly in front of Barton Coliseum . All contestants, families, and fans must enter into Barton Coliseum at Entrance 3.**

**Complimentary Sashes:** Count this as your official ticket to advance and compete at the Arkansas State Fair. Your local county will have this uniform, beautiful sash to match your sister queens throughout the state. Remember to bring it, and wear it proudly.

**Interview:** This private, timed, five minute interview is a great opportunity to showcase your personality to the judging panel. Come prepared to talk about the topics on your entry form, current events, the fair in general, etc. This counts for 50% of your total score.

**Parade of Contestants:** This is the opening number. You'll walk up to the mic and say a fun introduction. Example: your name and your county.

**Interview/Parade of Contestants Attire:** Think bright, fun with flair, yet professional. Pantsuit, casual dress, jumpsuit, skirt, etc. This outfit will be what you wear for interview and the parade of contestants with your official complimentary Arkansas State Fair county/district sash when the pageant begins.

**Evening Gown:** After the parade of contestants, it is time for evening wear! You may wear a gown of your choice. We encourage you to wear something age-appropriate. Come ready to showcase your poise and confidence. Stage presence, eye contact, posture, and overall impression are important too. This counts for 30% of your score.

After the evening gown portion, the top 20 contestants will be invited back on stage to compete in onstage conversation.

**Onstage Conversation:** Contestants will be called to the stage in groups of four. In this three minute, timed event the emcee will lead the conversation by asking a question, and contestants will participate in a "conversation" with each other. One or two follow-up questions may also be asked by the emcee. This phase is judged on a contestant's ability to speak confidently, but listen sincerely. Judges are instructed to view this competition as a visual of how a contestant will present herself as a title holder and be representative of the Arkansas State Fair in a public setting. This counts as 10% of your final score.

After the onstage conversation portion, the top 10 contestants will be invited back on stage to compete in onstage question.

**Onstage Question:** Contestants will need to think on their feet with confidence and be prepared to shine. The emcee will ask a question unique to each young lady. This will count as 10% of your final score.

**Royalty:** Scholarships, cash prizes, and any additional awards will be awarded that night respectively. After crowning, we'll have a brief welcome meeting to discuss your reign at the Arkansas State Fair for the following week and upcoming year. It is time for you to shine!

**Hair and Makeup:** A list of local, affordable vendors (not affiliated with the Arkansas State Fair) will be available for you to contact for services. They will be set up in rooms 2 and 3

backstage, or you can do your own hair and makeup. We want this to be a fun, stress free, experience. Do what makes you feel confident.

**Backstage:** There will be plenty of space, but we do not want it congested. If a contestant needs assistance getting ready, one person can assist and then promptly leave the area. Only contestants and their plus one (if needed) as well as approved vendors are allowed backstage before the pageant begins. You are free to have your phone or walk to the front to see your family.

## Talent Showdown (Ages 14+)

**How do I compete?** All contestants must reside in the state of Arkansas for a minimum of six months and win their local ASF affiliated county or district fair to be invited to the Arkansas State Fair Talent Showdown. It is free for those contestants to enter. In the event that your county does not have a fair or produce a talent show, you can compete as a “contestant at large” for a fee of \$50 to enter. Official Entry form for county delegates and contestants at large can be found online at [arkansasstatefair.com](http://arkansasstatefair.com).

**Am I eligible? Junior Division** contestants must be 14 - 17 years of age, by October 1st. **Senior Division** contestants are 18 - 23 years of age, by October 1st and the **Adult Division** consists of contestants age 24 and up.

If you have a group comprised of different ages, the acts must enter in the division applicable to the average age of the entire group.

JR/SR/ADULT contestants must not have ever been convicted of any crime or have any criminal charges pending. JR/SR contestants must not have ever been married, divorced, or have children.

### **Here are the talent categories that are eligible to perform:**

**Vocal Solo** shall consist only of a vocal performance by one vocalist. The self-accompaniment vocalist will be judged on vocals only.

**Vocal Group** shall consist of 2 and no more than 10 vocalists. No other talent may be performed. There will only be up to 5 microphones available.

**Dance Solo** shall consist of 1 dancer. No other talent may be displayed in conjunction with the dance performance. All types of dancing will be judged in this category – tap, jazz, ballet, folk, contemporary, ethnic, fad, etc. Gymnastics, tumbling, acrobatics, or any other form of gymnastics is NOT allowed due to stage restrictions and liability.

**Dance Group** shall consist of 2 and no more than 12 dancers. No other talent may be displayed in conjunction with the dance performance. The same rules listed under Dance

Solo apply.

**Variety** shall consist of a performance of 1 and no more than 10 people. Variety is intended to provide a proper showcase for those acts in which multiple talents are displayed. No act may include a drum set(s), swords, open flames, or forms of flammable liquid.

**Instrumental Solo** shall consist of an instrumental performance without vocal utterance by one performer. Taped accompaniment may be used. Contestants are highly encouraged to memorize their performance rather than using sheet music while performing. **ASF does not furnish a music stand.** NO drums allowed.

**Stage:** 40 feet in length, 24 in depth and 2 feet in height.

**Time Limits:** Each act should be no more than 3 minutes long. No exceptions.

**Musical Accompaniment:** Music will only be accepted on a USB drive and must be clearly labeled with contestants name. There should only be the act you are performing on this USB drive. **No phones, iPods, or iPads will be used.** No fading or stopping of the music will be allowed if you are digitally playing your music. The ASF does not provide instruments. However, an 88 key keyboard will be available with no music stand. Please bring anything you may need.

**Can I bring a prop?** Props are highly discouraged due to time constraints. If you use/need one, we highly suggest it must be used as a functional part of your act.

**What are the performances judged on?** Stage Presence/Professionalism (10%), Technical Ability (10%), Appearance/Wardrobe (10%), and Entertainment Value (20%).

*Any inappropriate lyrics or moves in the performance will result in immediate disqualification. The ASF Showdown staff has the right to interrupt a performance if it is not deemed suitable for the ASF Talent Showdown.*

**Okay, I have won my local county/district or have decided to compete as a contestant at large. I submitted my paperwork! What is next?** Come prepared with whatever song/act you like. The music can stay the same as what you won with locally, or you can change it. It is now showtime!

**Check in:** All contestants, from all counties will arrive at the Arkansas Building at 9 AM. Please check in and turn in your music. A dressing room will be available backstage. We highly recommend arriving ready (costume, hair, makeup, etc.) to perform due to space. The show will begin at 10 AM. Please be in your reserved seats (in the front) by 9:45.

**Awards:** Talent category awards will be recognized per division. However, the top scoring 9 acts (3 JRs, 3 SRs, and 3 Adults) plus the judge's wildcard contestant (that can come from any age division) will be selected and invited to battle it out at the finals at 3 PM on the official Arkansas State Fair Attraction Stage outside by the midway!

**“The Showdown” Final Round:** Check in for the showdown will be at the sound booth at the Attraction Stage at 2:30 PM. The Showdown will begin at 3:00. After the 10 contestants perform on the Attraction Stage, cash prizes for each age division and placement will be awarded. An overall grand champion will be awarded a trophy and \$1,000.

## Youth Pageant (13 and under) & Talent (Ages 5-9 and 10-13)

Official entry forms and rules are available for the youth pageant and talent show at [arkansasstatefair.com](http://arkansasstatefair.com). All entry forms and fees (\$100) must be submitted online. These competitions are open to all Arkansas residents and are held in the Arkansas Building.

**Youth Pageant:** Check in will begin at 8:00 AM with the pageant beginning at 9:00 AM. Arrive ready to rock the stage because space is extremely limited. Contestants will compete in a beauty dress of their choice. Competition for each age group will begin with a line up of contestants with individual modeling to follow. We will crown queens upon completion of every age group.

**Awards:** Queen, 1st and 2nd runners up will be presented after each division along with side awards (prettiest hair, eyes smile, best dress, photogenic.) Crowning will take place after every division or, every other division depending on the speed of our judges/contestants, etc.

**Note: For Photogenic, you must upload that photo to your online entry form. Do not worry about bringing the photo with you. The judges will judge this early that morning before the pageant begins.**

**Youth Talent (5-9 and 10-13 Year Olds):** This will follow immediately after the pageants. The fee to enter is \$50 per act. Any and all talents are welcome! Cash prizes for the top scores will be awarded. Music must be labeled and brought on an USB drive. No exceptions.

**A more detailed schedule will be emailed/mailed for both of these events prior to the event. The deadline to enter the youth pageants or talent competition is September 30th to ensure you receive your free parking pass and admission gate passes. No exceptions.**

## Elite Ms., Ms. and Sr. Ms. Pageant (Ages 24-75)

**Am I eligible?** All contestants must reside in the state of Arkansas for a minimum of 6 months before entering the competition. You may participate in the Elite Ms., Ms., or Sr. Ms. State Fair competition without a county/district/regional title. Elite Ms. Division: 24-34 years of age. Ms. Division: 35 - 55 years of age. Sr. Ms. Division: 56- 75 years of age. Compete as of your age, October 1st.

All applicants must have been born a female and continue to be a person of good moral character. Applicants have not and will not willingly appear in provocative and sexually explicit photographs for any film or publication before, during the competition, or during her reign. Contestants of the competition must have the physical and mental capabilities to participate in this competition.

**How do I compete?** The entry fee is \$175. Entry forms are found online at [arkansasstatefair.com](http://arkansasstatefair.com). Form, headshot, and fees must be submitted online. A more detailed schedule will be mailed and emailed to all contestants 2 weeks prior to the pageant along with parking passes. This event takes place in the Arkansas Building.

**Interview:** This private, timed 5 minute interview, is a great opportunity to showcase your personality to the judging panel. Come prepared to talk about the topics on your entry form, current events, the fair in general, etc. This counts for 50% of your total score.

**Parade of Contestants:** This is the opening number. You'll walk up to the mic and say a fun introduction. Example: your name and where you reside.

**Interview/Parade of Contestants Attire:** Think bright, fun with flair, yet professional. Pantsuit, casual dress, jumpsuit, skirt, etc. This outfit will be what you wear for interview and the parade of contestants.

**Evening Gown:** After the parade of contestants, it is time for evening wear! You may wear a gown of your choice. We encourage you to wear something age-appropriate. Come ready to showcase your poise and confidence. Stage presence, eye contact, posture, and overall impression are important too. This counts for 30% of your score.

**Onstage Conversation:** Contestants will be called to the stage in groups of 4. In this 3 minute, timed event the emcee will lead the conversation by asking a question, and contestants will participate in a "conversation" with each other. One or two follow-up questions may also be asked by the emcee. This phase is judged on a contestant's ability to speak confidently, but listen sincerely. Judges are instructed to view this competition as a visual of how a contestant will present herself as a title holder and be representative of the Arkansas State Fair in a public setting. This counts as 20% of your final score.

**Royalty:** Cash prizes, and any additional awards will be awarded that night respectively. After crowning, we'll have a brief welcome meeting to discuss your reign at the Arkansas State Fair for the remainder of the week and upcoming year. It is time for you to shine!

**Hair and Makeup:** A list of affordable vendors (not affiliated with the Arkansas State Fair) will be available for you to contact for services, or you can do your own hair and makeup. We want this to be a fun, stress free, experience. Do what makes you feel confident.

**Backstage:** There will limited space in the Arkansas Building. Only contestants and approved vendors are allowed backstage. You are free to have your phone or walk to the

front to see your family. There will be a small private area for changing that will be cell phone free. Mirrors, clothing racks, tables and chairs are provided by the ASF. Please do not bring these items.

*The State Executive Director and/or State Fair Management of the Arkansas State Fair Queen Pageant reserve the final and absolute right to interpret these rules and arbitrarily settle and determine all matters, questions, and differences in regard thereto, or otherwise arising out of or connected with, or incident to the competition, and the right to amend or add to these rules as their judgment may determine. Any contestant who fails to abide by any of the above rules or any rule/statement given orally may be disqualified from the Regional or Finals Competition by the State Executive Director and/or State Fair Management.*

The ASF is not responsible for lost/stolen/damaged items or items left in the dressing room or other areas of the Arkansas Building or in Barton Coliseum.

**Remember, these are the guidelines for the Arkansas State Fair. While you are more than welcome to adapt any of these formats to your local fair pageant or talent show, you know what is best for your county. Our only requirement for local fairs/districts is to advance contestants that are able to abide by our rules once they are here and represent their perspective age divisions for their competitions. Directors, if you need additional assistance please reach out to us directly and take a look at our “Directors Resource Guide.” We look forward to having a fun atmosphere and providing an amazing experience for participants, families, fans, and everyone attending the Arkansas State Fair.**

**We appreciate your support.**